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UNCLAS YEREVAN 002540

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR G/TIP, DRL AND EUR/CACEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [AM](#) [KTIP](#)

SUBJECT: EX-VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING ARRESTED FOR
RECRUITING WOMEN TO BE TRAFFICKED TO DUBAI

[1](#)1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (SBU) Hasmik Hakobyan, a former trafficking victim who has been working with the International Organization on Migration (IOM) office in Yerevan, was arrested on charges of organizing prostitution November 16, 2004. Hakobyan purportedly arranged to send two women to her former traffickers in Dubai, allegedly in an effort to recover money from the traffickers. End Summary.

DETAILS OF THE CASE

[1](#)2. (SBU) According to case materials, Hasmik Hakobyan had connections with a woman in Dubai Anahit Malkhasyan who was engaged in trafficking. Hakobyan had made an arrangement with Malkhasyan and four of her associates (Nanasil Arakelyan, Anahit Grigoryan, Siranush Musaelyan and Nelli Harutiunyan), and recruited Liana Mkrtchyan and Elmira Hakobyan in August and tried to send them to Dubai to engage in prostitution in September. Those actions were prevented when the mother of one of the girls applied to the Yerevan Police Department, which opened an investigation in this case.

BACKGROUND OF THE SUSPECT AND THE IOM LINK

[1](#)3. (SBU) Hasmik Hakobyan is a former victim of trafficking, who is engaged in IOM's trafficking victims' assistance activities. Hakobyan has also helped implement an IOM project "Performance against Trafficking," and shared her experiences as a former victim of trafficking. According to IOM, Hakobyan had connected two women, allegedly prostitutes, with her trafficker, in return for money or the promise of money. She had been invited to the Prosecutor General's office to testify, where she provided evidence against herself. Following this, the Prosecutor's office pressed charges against her and demanded her arrest. Hakobyan subsequently recanted her earlier testimony and is currently being held in court-authorized pretrial detention.

COMMENT: A MESSY CASE

[1](#)4. (SBU) Martin Wyss, the former Head of IOM in Yerevan, told us the case against Hakobyan was "tragic." He said that he believed Hakobyan when she told him she was seeking to repay a debt to her former traffickers the only way she knew how: by engaging in trafficking herself. While this case may be a blow to IOM's anti-trafficking work (which we support) we will encourage the GOAM to prosecute this and every other trafficking case to the full extent of the law.
EVANS